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YOUTH COUNCIL APPLICATIONS BEING ACCEPTED

Applications are currently being accepted for the Catawba County Youth Council. The Council began meeting in January 2008 to provide a youth voice and perspective to local government. The council consists of 25 high school students with 2-3 representatives from each school and selected community organizations.

The Youth Council meets monthly on the 3rd Tuesday evening of each month at the Agricultural Resources Center in Newton. Students are appointed to the Council by the Catawba County Commissioners. Students are appointed for a one-year term but may choose to continue on the Council until they graduate or change schools, if they wish.

According to Donna Mull, Catawba County 4-H Agent and Youth Council Advisor, "a growing number of city and county governments are organizing youth councils as a way to educate and hear from teen leaders about local issues. Often governing boards, make decisions that impact youth but never hear the opinion of the youth effected".

Youth Councils provides an avenue for students to improve their leadership skills and learn more about and become involved with local issues and civic affairs. During their first year, the Catawba County Youth Council has established by-laws, elected officers, hosted a Youth Conversation where they identified top local issues, and participated in the NC Citizenship Focus. During the coming year, the group will apply for chartering to be recognized as NC Youth Council and offer programs to help students learn more about local issues.

Youth Council applications may be obtained from high school guidance counselors. Interested students may also contact the NC Cooperative Extension Center at 465-8240, e-mail donna_mull@ncsu.edu, or visit the Catawba County web site at <http://www.catawbacountync.gov>. Completed applications are due by October 20.



Chilo Forsyth (left) and Wade Hartman (right) assemble bags of canned food at ECCCM. Forsyth is a student at St. Stephens High and represents Boy Scouts on the Council. Hartman is the home school student representative on the Council.